# New South

## Minority South

***A Southern Yankee, a Southern Police Chief, and a Southern Newspaper Reader View Dixie Disorder, Character, and Promise***

By MARGARET LONG

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THE MYSTERY of human quality, in the old-fashioned sense of personal fineness, seems particularly fascinating in the present revolution of young Negroes overturning segregation in the South. Wherever, one wonders, did this gentle boy's valor, that dark girl's endurance or this fierce young man's control come from? Here is the intelligent, beautifully mannered boy from a filthy slum, the unremarkable son of a distinguished professor, a pretty little heroine whose mother is a South Georgia cook, a chocolate-brown heiress to an insurance fortune. Here is a cinnamon-colored boy with a bright, wild face like a faun who came to the Movement with a switchblade knife and stayed to bear the insults and blows of demonstrations in steadfast submission. Here are young people of dignity and devotion, whose quality is staunch in sudden celebrity. Here are others youthfully cocky in the new limelight and some riding mainly for the ride and the brave identity it affords.

And here is the mysterious quality of a 19-year-old Floridian, a slender, six-foot-three, black boy whose narrow face slopes up to a strong Negroid nose and flowering black mouth. It is an eager, deep-eyed face poignant in contours still tenderly young, the face of a young man too thoughtful to be arrogant, but proud in his conviction of his humanity and humble in his awareness of other people.

He is the oldest of 11 children, the son of poor and generally deprived Negroes. He was a child whose defiant spirit provoked almost daily whippings from a family bewildered, like any of

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# Some of My Best Friends Are Southerners

By George A. Gulette

I BELONG TO A minority group which, while certainly not persecuted in this state, feels keenly its rejection by a dominant white majority. I am a Yankee.

The term is not wholly unambiguous, with or without its customary prefix. I remember the word as an unsavory one from my own childhood in the Middle West, but like the Westerners, we used it to express contempt for Easterners, particularly New Englanders, whom we regarded as effete, affected, and slightly decadent. I have often thought of the double pain a poor GI from Georgia must suffer at the "Yankee, Go Home" jibe on foreign soil. Imagine this nice Georgia boy trying desperately to explain to the Germans that he, of all people, is not a Yankee!

I am well aware of what the term means when applied to me in the South, that I was not born here and that I do not fully share the complex of beliefs and attitudes that define the Southern point of view. It helps not a whit to explain that my French Huguenot ancestors came to Charleston long before the Revolutionary War and that distant members of the clan are scattered all through North and South Carolina. My grandfather or my great-grandfather or my great-great grandfather made the mistake of moving West; hence I was born on alien soil and am doomed to Yankeehood forever.

There are thousands like me in the South. Our numbers are sure to grow. What are we like, we Yankees who have adopted the South, though the South can scarcely be said to have adopted us? Why did we come? Why do we stay?

I came some 14 years ago to teach in North Carolina because I had faith in its future and that of the whole South. I have committed my

*Dr. Gulette, Indiana-born, Harvard-educated Yankee now head of the Department of Social Studies at North Carolina State College, condensed for* New South *his candid, affectionate, and uncompromising view of his adopted South, originally written for* The Charlotte Observer. *We present his condensation with pleasure in Dr. Gulette's respect and optimism for his home and ours.*

life and that of my family to this faith.

I am now going to speak of the Negro. I know that this is distasteful. I have learned not to discuss the matter on social or polite occasions. I have learned too that what makes me irrevocably a Yankee, beyond all questions of ancestry or birth or speech or manners, is my unwillingness to relinquish the belief that all American citizens are entitled to the benefits of American citizenship. This is why Yankees are suspect; this is why Yankees cannot be absorbed completely and unselfconsciously into the life of a southern community. If I were to give in on this, I think I could "pass." The unspoken invitation is there, and I can hear it, but I cannot accept it.

Perhaps we naturalized Southerners who have adopted the South and have come to love her and her people, can out of that love perform a very special service. We are a minority group and know what it feels like to run into closed doors and invisible barriers. The Negro is a minority group and understands these things better than any of us. But the southern white is beginning to realize that he, too, is a minority in America, and the majority is putting the squeeze on him.

My suggestion is only that maybe we hurting minorities ought to get together. Maybe out of this common bond we can build something strong and good. For all of us.

The basic weapon used to enforce the system of dual citizenship in the South has been fear. What is not always recognized is that fear is a double-edged sword and that white Southerners are also afraid of each other. There is a vile and half-threatening epithet which every Southerner knows may be hurled at him if he shows signs of breaking with the southern creed. It is a phrase I would not utter, much less print, but everyone knows what it is.

This secret fear that corrodes the spirit of many otherwise courageous Southerners I, precisely because I have been a Yankee, have had a special opportunity to learn about. I cannot count the number of times southern friends have come to me privately to say that they understand about the Negro and are sympathetic but do not dare speak out because of what their relatives and neighbors might say. Students come to me, particularly those who have served in the armed forces, to tell me that their views have changed but that they wouldn't dare say so to their families at home. These confessionals, both from students and from adults, are so commonplace that I can get a knowing laugh from any group of transplanted Yankees by saying, "For myself I wouldn't mind, but . . ."

I judge from conversations with my southern friends that the informed among them are unanimously convinced that a slow process of desegregation is now inevitable. They see possibilities for further delay, but no real hope of turning back the march of events. They are resigned to this, but terribly unhappy about it. All the vague old fears about miscegenation and mongrelization lurk in the back of their minds, and when they try to face the fact that Negro children from admittedly underprivileged homes, from

admittedly inferior social and educational backgrounds, may be studying side by side with their own children, they are sometimes near panic. A nice lady said to me recently, "I think it is going to happen, but I want to be dead when it does."

This sense of impending doom, this spirit of resigned hopelessness is, I believe, the totally unnecessary fruit of the climate of fear that Southerners impose upon each other. In this atmosphere no one dares to say that the South will unquestionably be happier, more prosperous, more proud and vigorous than it ever dreamed of being, once this albatross is removed from its neck. Where are the confident voices who have true faith in the South and its future, who see that it really does represent a new and exciting frontier in American life?

For my part, I have decided that it is, ironically, one of the South's most endearing virtues—a warm and wonderful sense of hospitality—that finally stands in the way of visualizing hopefully a social arrangement in which Negroes exercise their full civic rights. Southerners are so open-heartedly accustomed to thinking that any friend must be invited to dinner, that when they try to imagine equality of opportunity between the races they immediately think they must open their homes to Negroes.

The Supreme Court did not say this. It said simply that such public and civic rights as all citizens are entitled to, Negroes are entitled to because they are citizens. In New York you may live in an apartment house across the hall from another family for 10 years and do no more than nod to your neighbors in the elevator. Not only is there no obligation to invite them in to dinner, but in fact you are thought aggressive and nosy if you force yourself into their affairs. I do not mean to hold the social arrangements of New York up as a model—God forbid!—but somehow we former Yankees ought to be able to pass the word that the granting to all citizens of their civil rights does not necessarily and inevitably mean that we must invite them to share our bed and board.

There's that word bed. This too is close to the heart of many of my friends' fears. They are so worried about their genes, or their sister's genes, that they cannot imagine a society in which all citizens are free to exercise their rights of citizenship without imposing themselves or their religious or political or other personal views upon others. They cannot imagine an arrangement that calls for public equality together with personal privacy. Yet this is not only the heart of the American dream, but a reality that is reasonably approximated in countless urban areas in the United States today.

I therefore invite my southern friends to embark upon a new freedom ride, a ride toward freedom from fear of each other. What I can say will not be listened to, because I am a Yankee. But if the decent and honorable though non-vocal majority of North Carolinians will have the courage to speak their convictions, I have no slightest doubt that this state will continue to lead the way for that southern Renaissance which has been so long, and so needlessly, delayed.

# Police, Minorities and Mobs

*By E. C. HALE*

*Chief of Police, Lexington, Ky.*

The police officer should not be guided by public sentiment in the performance of duty. He should be guided by firmness, fairness, and impartiality. It is certain that if duty is performed in a manner commensurate with these standards it will meet with public approval and commendation.

Firmness does not mean belligerence. The former is characteristic of good policing, and the latter is characteristic of bad policing. It is essential that the police officer act with such firmness and resolution as is necessary to deal with any given situation. Unless he does so, it is impossible for him to command the respect that is essential to keeping the peace. However, he should avoid assuming an attitude that would create hostility in the minds of either those involved or onlookers.

The police are only one source among several that must be utilized if we would master the problem of human relations and minimize the consequences of minority-group tension. Often the police are unjustly accused of aggravating and promoting tension. This arises out of their crucial and necessarily constant involvement in incidents threatening public order. It is likely that the police will continue to be the butt of much undeserved criticism and attack. They will be damned both for what they do and what they do not do. They are like minority groups, a convenient scapegoat for those who have failed to accept their responsibilities in coping with major social problems. They will attempt, as do frustrated and insecure groups generally, to deny their own failures and shortcomings by blaming the police. We have noted that the police can do much to avoid this criticism. However, their central role in the protection and securing of civil liberties makes them a rallying point in the mobilization of all the forces of the community. The police can do much to indicate the responsibility of related community elements and at the same time to bring about more public support in times of crisis.

The mobilization of constructive community elements to deal with tension is first an informal task. The police department is in an unusual position to spot those localities where tension is rising and to make known the fact in responsible circles. Here it would be well to utilize the vast network and coverage of the police force in reporting the state of mind of the community. Every patrolman should be required to record all incidents involving minority-group relations in his experience. These should be reported as a

matter of form and cleared in the central offices of the police department. Such a record might include the following items: (1) What took place?; (2) What appears to have set off the incident?; (3) Where did it take place?; (4) Who were the parties to the dispute and what others were involved?; (5) Other details.

This information should be carefully examined by supervisory personnel. These supervisors should in turn alert their subordinate officer. The same type of report could be made available from other strategic agencies with a similar city-wide coverage. Such strategically located persons as school teachers, community workers, ministers, transportation employees, housing directors, and social workers, with officials of the police department, would offer comprehensive and important information on tensions and possible developments.

Informed contacts make possible a complete and rounded picture of the community's condition. Incidents nearly always occur in public and quasi-public places. The police officer who has established friendly contacts with key individuals in his locality (local business men, tavern owners, pool room operators, etc.) can be constantly informed by them as to incidents of this kind. It is absolutely essential that police officers keep close tab on the activities of juvenile gangs, since it is out of the predatory acts of such groups that many of the most serious incidents of racial friction arise.

The experience of minority groups with police authorities has not always been a happy one. Indeed, the Negro has had good reason to look with suspicion and fear upon the uniformed officer. The police authorities should not be law-enforcement officials, as we know them, only with reference to the white community. The police officer must treat Negroes in such a manner that they will be aware of "the law" as an agent of the entire community.

The effect of wrongful treatment will cause Negroes to carry over the memories of their past experience to the detriment of the whole community. The only manner in which the confidence of all groups can be won is by impartial and rigorous enforcement of the law. Absolute impartiality requires that the law be enforced against ALL violators. The idea that race, creed, or nationality are extenuating factors, permitting different applications of the law, must be abandoned.

Equal justice is not merely a term. The police officer who is tempted to vary his role according to personal notions as to the worth of various groups is himself in violation of the law. An officer has a capacity for delivering equal justice only to the extent that he has this problem under control. An unwitting evidence of an officer's inadequacy is the persistent use of insulting terms such as "jig", "nigger", "Kike", or "wop". An individual may insist that such a usage is not meant to be offensive. Such an explanation is lacking in insight, for such terms are the symbols of offense, and they are violently resented by the persons so labeled.

Protestations of impartiality mean nothing to an individual who has been so addressed. To the injured person,

the very process of labeling means that the victim's right to be treated as an individual has been violated. He has been classified in terms to suggest that he enjoys only an inferior or second-class status. The use of such terms must be scrupulously avoided.

Unequal law enforcement also has the effect of encouraging a concentration of questionable activities in certain areas. These, in turn, become associated with the minority groups among whom they become lodged. Much of the commercialized vice is foisted upon the colored community by virtue of the larger community's willingness to permit such activities to flourish there. To deliberately permit questionable activities to become concentrated among certain minority groups is not only to invite the corruption of that group, but it further aggravates the problem of the police in dealing with that group.

A good standard of fairness would be treatment of the individual in the same manner as the police officer would desire to be treated if he were the individual and the other party the police officer. A good reputation for fairness in dealing with the public is an invaluable asset to a police department because it instills public confidence, making police work more pleasant and effective.

Acts of partiality are likely to result from excitement. Excitement in turn may be caused by any happening that would shock a normal individual. He must remember that he is not a participant and must refrain from taking sides. He is a law enforcement officer and must remain cool and deliberate. He is interested in facts and causes which he proceeds to ascertain, being very careful to follow the facts wherever they lead him, and to treat everyone just the same.

There is no more important element in disturbing the confidence of minority groups in the enforcement of the law and building up resentment against the police authority than reports of brutality. Modern police science has long abandoned extreme and repressive measures in dealing with law violators. Furthermore, it is a fundamental tenet of American law that a citizen is to be regarded as innocent until proven guilty. Correspondingly, brutal police methods are especially disturbing, since they presume the guilt of persons who may be innocent. It is a mistake for a police officer to conceive of his relationship with a member of a minority group as an affair which concerns only himself and an individual. Minority group members invariably recite their experiences with the police in the community. It follows that an instance of police brutality becomes identified with the entire police force, and the whole minority group becomes hostile to all policemen. Each police officer, as the uniformed symbol of the law, is constantly shaping the attitudes and opinions of minority groups toward the apparatus of law enforcement. Hence, while police brutality may subdue a given individual, it, at the same time, creates hostility in the rest of the community toward the entire police force.

In some police circles, there exists the mistaken notion that the most effective police officers for minority

group communities are those who "know how to handle the Negro". This usually connotes the use of forceful and repressive measures by an individual police officer concerning which no questions will be asked. Experience has proven how mistaken this is. The entire police force suffers as a result of the brutal measures of an individual officer. *The true victims of police brutality are the police themselves,* since it develops widespread hostility and disrespect for law among the members of the minority group.

The power that men are permitted to exercise over their fellow men is rigidly limited by the laws of the community. Nevertheless, men desire power, and it is nowhere more obvious than in the unbridled actions of a mob. It is incredible, but true, that a mob can derive a kind of satisfaction out of beating up members of a minority group, burning their homes, and pillaging their places of business. The members of a mob receive from these acts a sense of personal satisfaction. This is related to their ordinary helplessness and feelings of unimportance in their everyday lives. For the one fleeting moment of a mob's existence, its members gain a false sense of personal power. They have a passing chance to exercise control and take things into their own hands. Anyone who has seen a mob in action is well aware that it overrides reason. Its sense of power is like a tidal wave that sweeps over all who would resist it.

In addition to the adult insecurities and frustrations, there are more intimate and personal experiences of childhood which affect men. Children often carry into adulthood the effects of damaging childhood experience. The alarming amounts of adult insanity and general neurotic and unstable behavior have been partly attributed to unfortunate childhood experiences. Psychiatrists have pointed out that much hostile behavior in the form of race hatred and prejudice can be traced directly to childhood difficulties. It is these highly emotional and excitable individuals who play a large part in crowd and mob behavior. They communicate their own personal excitement to others and thus help to organize it.

There are always available, at any moment and in any gathering, a large number of individuals such as we have described. They are ready at the slightest provocation to vent their own feeling in the form of aggressive and hostile acts toward the scapegoat minority groups. Frustrated and insecure individuals, numerous as they are, are ready and willing to search out others who can be blamed for their shortcomings and failures.

Incitement to racial tension and disturbance comes not only from the extreme right but from the extreme left as well. It is important to recognize the sense in which race has become a weapon in mobilizing groups against one another in the interest of other issues which may be concealed from the minority or majority groups themselves. Hence, the police must always be prepared to deal with artificially created incidents, as well as those which develop naturally. The police must here be doubly cautious; since the moods and sympathies of the contending groups are played upon by

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# AUGUST 31, 1961

BESIDE ME IS the *New York Times,* for the last day of August of the centennial year of the American Civil War and the emancipation of the Russian serfs. To us in the provinces the *Times* comes a day late and drops into a limbo between news and history, already outmoded by the quick turns of a restless, chafing world. Because the *Times* is our great newspaper one must read it, if he is addicted as I am to what years ago in grammar school we called "current events." But because it comes a day late, and is thus diluted "news," one may read it whenever he can, at his ease and not as he runs. And to be one up of the *Times*—farther ahead in the current of events—is slyly fun.

I know, therefore, what came next as I take in the five-column headline of August 31, 1961:

Soviet Resuming Atomic Tests;
Asserts West Forced Decision;
Similar U.S. Action is Expected.

But even though I know what came next, this is still a pretty awesome headline, one that a man can well chew on for a day, or a month, or a lifetime. And on the whole, I like it just as well that I don't know now as much as all of you will know by the time these lines are in print.

For snuggled between the columns of the day's Big Story are two items which a man not only can chew on but can turn about in his cheeks and savor. "Public school desegregation came peacefully today to Atlanta and Georgia." "A three-judge federal court struck down Louisiana's school closing law today." I want to savor these more than briefly, but my eyes keep flitting back to that five-column head, and the obscure future which it implies. Where will we be in the South if war comes, and we with a half-won victory of our own to secure, half way home to decency and regional self-respect? What does the Russian decision, and our response to it, mean for the civil right of the Negroes of the rural South?

Nor was it only the Russian announcement which shoved our two mighty thrusts for human liberty to the bottom of page one. Still on the first page, President Kennedy was returning General Clay to Berlin, to enhance the nation's "resources of judgment and action" in a situation "fraught with danger." The President was also sending a message to the neutral nations conferring at Belgrade, and was addressing a plea to the steel industry to hold the line on prices. The threat of civil war hovered over Brazil. A half million Americans are to take part in a massive survey of the causes of heart disease, in a country grown fat and indolent. The Metropolitan Opera presented its side of a wage dispute with its musicians before government arbitrators.

There were other strands of the human condition which unwound into the glare of the front page of the August 31 *Times.* The Interstate Commerce Commission proposed a federal subsidy for railroads. The iron horses crisscross everywhere but somehow, perhaps because the rela-

tive quiet of the southern countryside accentuated their wail, perhaps because the South had so little other machinery to be fascinated by, have a peculiarly cherished place in the South. Knowing that the railroads are in hard financial straits is to know again that all great things shall pass away. Two other items had reference clear and direct to the South and racial relations. The Governor of New York appointed a commission to study welfare administration, denying as he did so that the action was prompted by the controversial new code of the City of Newburgh, which institutionalizes suspicion and mistrust of welfare recipients, most of whom in Newburgh are Negroes. In an action of chilling import, the House of Representatives killed the federal school construction bill. From the eleven-state South—where federal aid for education is needed more than anywhere else—came 21 votes for, 76 against. Alabama divided 4 in favor, 3 against; Arkansas, 1 and 4; Florida, 0 and 8; Georgia, 5 and 4; Louisiana, 1 and 5; Mississippi, 0 and 6; North Carolina, 2 and 10; South Carolina, 0 and 6; Tennessee, 3 and 6; Texas, 4 and 14; Virginia, 1 and 9.

In the back pages is the roll-call record of another vote, this one in the Senate and having to do with the extension of the Commission on Civil Rights for two more years. The measure passed, aided by two Tennessee votes. It was noteworthy that the South was abandoned again, as it has consistently been of late, by all its neighbors. The Senators from Oklahoma, Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware voted unanimously for extension.

So one comes back to Atlanta's great day, and the judicial decision in Louisiana. The *Times* had an editorial good word for "Atlanta's Good Example." At his press conference, Mr. Kennedy commended Georgia's governor and Atlanta's mayor, police chief, school superintendent, parents, students, and citizens. It was good of the President to mention the parents and students among whom, of course, are included the Negro students, and their mothers and fathers, whose dauntless attachment to the belief that America should practice its ideals made possible Atlanta's triumph. The President perhaps was uninformed, and the *Times* evidently thought it news not fit to print, that on the day Atlanta's schools desegregated, state law officers, under personal instructions from the governor whom Mr. Kennedy praised, were in federal court at Atlanta fighting another battle for the principle of racial separation in the schools of Atlanta. Nevertheless, it *was* a great day, not only for Atlanta and Georgia, but for free men everywhere. The extent of desegregation is saddeningly small, but it is a fact, and it was brought about through an inspiring recruitment of civic spirit. Atlantans felt good on August 31, and have reason to: they had inched the nation a bit closer toward the American dream.

And when one follows the Louisiana story from page one to page 14, where there are excerpts from the court's opinion, his reviving faith in the invincibility of liberty fairly leaps, despite atomic weapons, power politics, or heart disease. In the hearty

yet fine language of the common law and the Constitution, the Court spoke its judgment.

> Undeterred by the failure of its prior efforts, the Louisiana Legislature continues to press its fight for racial segregation in the public schools of the state. . . . The Louisiana Legislature has confected one "evasive scheme" after another in an effort to achieve this end. This court has held these unconstitutional in one decision after another, affirmed by the Supreme Court . . . a state cannot close the public schools in one area while, at the same time, it maintains schools elsewhere with public funds. . . . The requirement of a popular referendum on the question of closure adds nothing to the challenged statute. One of the purposes of the Constitution of the United States was to protect minorities. No plebescite can legalize an unjust discrimination. . . .
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> This is not the moment in history for a state to experiment with ignorance. When it does, it must expect close scrutiny of the experiment.

It is the sheer mass of news about racial problems that startles—startles us, if we are educable, into awareness that the racial troubles of our country can wait but little longer for relief, and the only relief is a solution that accords with the dignity of each citizen.

Move from the front to the back pages of the paper, and one finds no less than six important stories. One, I have already mentioned: the Senate's approval of two years more for the Commission on Civil Rights. There are also reports of school desegregation in Newport News; the integration of a hotel swimming pool in St. Louis (because of the threatened withdrawal of a convention; when will someone integrate something just because it is right to do so?); a fight at another sector of the northern front by Newburgh, this time fussing with the U. S. Housing and Home Finance Administration about an urban renewal project and blaming its woes on "agitation" by the NAACP. Portugal ended the distinction between "civilized" and "noncivilized" natives, thus making all Angolans eligible for civil rights. The 25 nation African group at the United Nations met and expressed deep concern over "recurrent and serious incidents" in the United States of discrimination against African diplomats.

All this, in one day's paper! One tiny bit of time, laden with the ripened accumulation of old sins and errors. All this, without, as it happened, a single news story of sit-ins, of Freedom Riding, or voter discrimination, or employment discrimination, or of an unwholesome horde of other issues that are propelling us rapidly toward either sane, fair racial relations or social disaster. —L. W. D.

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**Police** (*Continued from page 9*)

persons who are calculating and deliberate. If the police do not act carefully in the protection of individual rights and in complete impartiality, they may become the goat in the situation and play directly into the hands of those who are deliberately fomenting racial antagonisms.

Impartial enforcement of the law and impartial treatment of the public are essential in our society.

## Strictly Subjective

(*Continued from page 2*)

us, at intractability. Somehow he got through high school and to Howard University in Washington for two years, where he learned a good deal academically and even more about white people.

He made white friends, went to their parties and found them cordial, but apparently unable to talk to him about anything but being a Negro and always suddenly uneasy "when I danced with a white girl." And there were other affable whites, like the insurance salesman who "made friendly, social talk about the weather when I wanted to talk to him about the student demonstrations." He is still baffled by the conversational limits of white people talking to Negroes.

"I had a white friend, a roommate at Howard," he recalled. Jobhunting, always I'd find a job at $25 or $50 a week and he easily got one paying $75, although I had more college, training and learning. Then I did become bitter and my hatred of white people was at an all-time high. It was cutting off my enjoyment and my pursuit of happiness. I am still at times bitter and belligerent with white people, although I know bitterness destroys the one who is bitter. I have to fight it. But, unless I'm rebellious in the South, I don't feel like a man."

His experience of whites was further enriched by his summer Freedom Ride to Jackson, and his dialogue with Mississippi guards. He was among the early Riders who were manhandled at the state prison and he maintained his rebelliousness, tempered by the non-violent technique.

"He'd say, 'What's your name, boy?' and I'd say, 'Henry Thomas,' and wham with the black jack. I saw stars three or four times during the questioning, but I never would say 'sir.' A man came in and said he was Assistant Superintendent Thomas, and I said, 'My pleasure sir; I'm Henry Thomas.' Then with the next question, when I didn't say, 'sir,' they hit me again. I tried hard, when they were yelling at me and hitting me and my defenses were down, to speak calmly and I managed to."

In prison, he devoted his wits and will to continuous demonstration, rallying fellow-prisoners to spirited exercise of their rights and to manly demeanor. When female Freedom Riders were deprived of their mattresses he presistently inquired about "the young ladies," demanding replies, and was otherwise "a troublemaker." For his pains he got several sessions in solitary, including one stint of 36 hours with no food or water.

Solitary was not really solitary, because the young prisoner and two friends were punished together in a one-man cell.

"I like to be alone," he explained. "I needed the time to get myself ready to accept what would happen, to figure out how I could take it with dignity, to die with dignity. But we were so close, you were touching somebody all the time and even a whisper would hit the walls and echo, and it got on our nerves and we were irritable all the time.

"I got frightened when they took us out to isolate us, because I'd been so much trouble I thought they might

leave me there and starve me. It didn't matter so much what would happen, but how I would react to it. I went on a fast for three days once, and I know I'm psychologically unfit for fasting. Food is my weak spot.

"But I felt I had to keep after them, to say what I had a right to, and answer like a man. Even when a guard would hit me, I felt that I had to take it so I'd make a point to him. Anything I ever said or did around the guards was to make a point. I was always fighting the cause, showing them a kind of Negro they'd never seen before."

The young Rider was removed from solitary a few hours after his companions were taken out, and was released from jail after 40 days and flown to New York for a job as field representative for CORE.

Free, he left the Hinds County jail and saw his old guard across the street. Remembering how he and his friends in Florida would rejoice to "waylay a white boy and surround him and talk to him about segregation and make him listen," the towering young Negro stalked slowly across the street, smiling at the confrontation, and "backed him into a corner of the building, a little man, the kind who is always brutal and cruel, without a gun or a blackjack or anything."

"I could have picked him up and smashed him down. I stood there maybe five minutes with the hate building up, and I had to talk to him to clear my mind. I smiled and told him he probably wasn't such a bad guy, that if we met sometime in another place we might sit and talk and enjoy it. He fidgeted and smiled and kept saying, 'Yeah, yeah, sure,' without any idea of what I would do. I knew I couldn't hit him if I looked at him, and that I didn't even have a deep grudge against him. I figured I had taken it all like a man—and two months is a long time with nothing but that guy— so I made him shake hands before I turned around and left.

"Love your neighbor, because it makes him so mad!" he quoted with a sudden flash of white teeth and a ring of laughter.

"I would pay the highest price for liberty. As a boy I loved military history, because I felt that these soldiers, these armies and these wars were guardians and fights for the freedom of all people, as they often were. Now, there's a new way of fighting to get our rights here. But I'm not a conscientious objector, or non-violent as a way of life. When I go into the Army, I'm sure the U.S. Government will not expect me to be non-violent.

"Non-violence is beautiful in a society where it can be, in a peaceful world. The students with non-violence seek understanding, at our own expense, and no other method could take us so far, in the reality of right now. With non-violence you make a friend of an enemy. I've got mixed feelings about it, and I can't love my oppressors. I think I want to, but I don't believe I can.

"White people? Well, some white people have been in the fight, have been in jail. Their actions show how they feel. The others, I don't hate them, but I just don't care.

"The ideal, I think, is to be a man and do what's best at the most of your capacity."

Straws and Freaks

# *Of Alabama beauty Little Rock revival and a liberal Kleagle*

The joyful self esteem with which Atlanta weathers all crises and savors all pleasures saw this first Deep South city through desegregation of four high schools with a surge of pride which billowed over buoyant students, police, city hall, news media and even some segregationists. It was like Metropolitan Opera Week, when Atlanta glows in the glamor of her own culture, or dogwood season when the city marvels over her beauty in a snowfall of white blooms. Desegregation week the thankful self-congratulation was over Atlanta's devotion to "law and order."

Through the great wave of proud order there gleamed little runs of generosity, sympathy, and human respect. A white boy close to a Negro student, welcomed him to school with the compliment that "I wouldn't have the guts to do what you're doing." Girls spoke shyly to new students in welcome and polite pleasure here and there. The nine desegregators reported that everybody was "nice" and "the expression on their faces was friendly."

Pride prevailed also in Little Rock and New Orleans, taking a new crop of Negro students without mob disorder, but in a more muted form than Atlanta's pleasure in peaceful history making.

Dallas desegregated in dignity and rigidly arranged peace, perhaps with similar civic pride. As one mother of a school child put it, "If we carried on like they did in New Orleans, people would think we didn't have no culture."

* * *

Beauty is no excuse for being in Baton Rouge, La., nor is brains if you're suspected of being "integrationist." Mrs. Bruce Evans, a Miss America finalist in 1949, was fired this month as a high school math teacher after the Reverend Mr. Evans preached "justice, decency and humility" between whites and Negroes. Mr. Evans last year signed a Baton Rouge Ministerial Association "affirmation of principles" in the heat of Louisiana desegregation strife. The parish school board in secret September session darkly discussed "a few people who advocate integration who have infiltrated our school system." Next day the beautiful Mrs. Evans, who was an honor student at Louisiana State, was notified by phone not to report to school.

* * *

Citizens of Little Rock voted 5,107 to 250, for a $1,400,000 bond issue to help bring a pump-making plant from California to Little Rock. The new Jacuzzi Brothers' pump factory is the first new industry for Little Rock since its school crisis starting Sept. 2, 1957.

* * *

A big news and picture man in Atlanta for a national magazine piece on desegregation cased the racial front from apartheidists to Martin Luther King and equalitarian white integrationists. Interviewing the leader of one of several Ku Klux Klan groups, the reporter found this Kleagle so soft-spoken in his disapproval of Jews and Catholics, longtime targets of the Knights' race-saving and Protestant-promoting, that he wondered "if the Klan will take Catholics and Jews as members?"

"No, they can't belong to the Klan," the Kleagle replied with gentle regret, and added eagerly, "but we solicit their support!"

# New South

TAKE ANY group of human beings and provide them with inferior education; deny them the right to vote; deny them equal job opportunities; force them to live in ghettos, and exclude them from hotels, public eating places, and even hospitals, and, developed under such conditions, they will scarcely be able to compete as first class citizens, unless they are supermen.

The Negro of the South has lived under these conditions for nearly 100 years and he is seeking, in constructive ways, to change them. In seeking to become a part of that dream, the Negro of the South helps to make that dream come true, not only for himself, but for the South and for the nation, and he deserves the help of both.

*From "The New Negro of the South," an address by President Stephen J. Wright of Fisk University at the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice at Detroit, August, 1961.*



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